

HISTORY

OF THE

MEDICAL SOCIETY

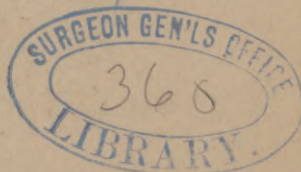
—OF—

ONEIDA COUNTY.

FROM ITS ORGANIZATION, JULY, 1806,  
TO JULY, 1878.

*BY D. G. THOMAS,*

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, JULY, 1878.



UTICA, N. Y.

T. J. GRIFFITHS, PRINTER, EXCHANGE BUILDINGS.

1878.

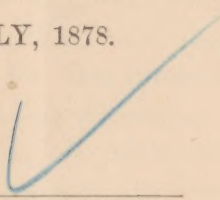


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## Medical Society of Oneida County.

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*Mr. President and Gentlemen :*

By a resolution passed at the last annual meeting of this society, it becomes my duty as chairman of the committee then appointed, to present to you a history of the measures employed to found and develop a compact of medical men, legalized by State authority, to care for the interests of the medical profession in Oneida County. For this purpose it will be necessary to turn back to the preliminary steps taken by a few physicians in the counties of Saratoga, Washington and Montgomery, to understand the conditions or circumstances which led to the important movement. Those who witnessed the progressive settlement of the northern and western sections of the State, can easily understand how few young men in central New York could obtain the means necessary for an edu-

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\* At the Annual Meeting of the Medical Society of the County of Oneida, July, 1877, a committee of three was appointed to prepare a history of the Society from its organization in 1806 to the present time, July, 1878. Drs. Thomas, Guiteau and Whaley were appointed to prepare and report such history.

cation, broad and comprehensive enough to be a good foundation for the study of medicine ; consequently a large proportion of those who were successful in obtaining a license were men of but little culture, and unused to the social amenities of life. Thus poorly qualified to discharge the duties which belonged to the profession, the struggle for business with them was a battle in which the grosser elements of humanity sought to gain a professional reputation, by arrogant boasting of the marvelous recoveries that had been made by the remedies they had administered.

But fortunately for the profession at large, there were some whose rare endowments enabled them to reach a high position in spite of all difficulties, while others more fortunate, had ample means to give them the necessary advantages, and thus secure a small army of competent and honorable practitioners. Most of them were men of marked ability, holding prominent positions not only in the town and county in which they lived, but some were leading and distinguished participants in the councils of the State. Such men as we have thus described were the founders of this society—men who were ornaments in social life, who adorned the medical profession, and with zealous enthusiasm engaged in every movement designed to benefit the profession at large, and to establish on an enduring basis the science of our noble calling.

In 1796 a series of articles were published in the newspapers of Saratoga, advocating the plan of hav-

ing medical societies organized by law to advance the interests of medical science; and at the same time to be a safeguard against the impositions of empiricism. A society was formed to carry out the proposed measure; but for the want of interest in its projects and the discordant materials of which it was composed, the year of its birth was the grave of the premature effort. All movements either in social or professional life, that look like innovations on old and established customs, require time, discussion and thought, to educate the human mind to a full understanding of the scope and measure of such needed changes, and bring them to act in concert, and in good faith to establish the new principle of action.

Previous to the year 1806 the medical profession in this State had no shield of law to guide its actions or protect its interests. The few practitioners who had become eminent in spite of the difficulties with which they were surrounded, had little power to elevate and dignify the profession, without the aid of legal rights secured by law. What did it matter if in the old country law had thrown its protecting arm around the profession, and given it a place among the kindred sciences, whilst here no legislative act had been invoked to guard its interests, and draw a line of separation between the pretending charlatan and the high-minded, honorable and conscientious physician? It was during this period of disorder, when law had no voice to proclaim the



duties, or power to enforce the special rights of medical men, that a second and successful effort was made, to place the members of the profession under the restraints of law.

Through the exertions of Dr. Stearns and a few medical men of Saratoga County a meeting was held at Ballston, the 7th of November, 1805, when William Patrick, John Stearns, and Grant Powell were appointed a committee to correspond with leading men in Washington and Montgomery counties, to get the sanction of the Legislature of the State for organizing medical societies. The 7th day of January, 1806, a meeting of the medical men of the three counties was held, and a memorial to the State Legislature was adopted and signed. Dr. Asa Fitch, of Washington, John Stearns, of Saratoga, and Alexander Sheldon, of Montgomery, were appointed a committee to present a memorial to the Legislature. This memorial asked the Legislature to give sanction to the societies formed in the three counties. Fortunately for the cause of science, Alexander Sheldon was chosen speaker, and gave the weight of his commanding position to the interests of the memorial. The committee assumed the responsibility, during the deliberations on this measure, of changing the original plan, and asking for a general law embracing the whole State instead of the three counties first named in the memorial. This memorial was presented to the Legislature on the 25th day of February, 1806, and referred to a committee, consisting of William Livingston and



Isaac Sargent of Washington, Gordon Huntington, of Otsego; John Ely, of Green, and Joel Frost, of Westchester. The majority of this committee were physicians deeply interested in the proposed measure, and they succeeded in maturing a bill for a general law of incorporation for the State. This bill was reported to the House and met with strong opposition, but finally passed both Houses and became the law of the State.

In accordance with the provisions of this act, a meeting of the physicians of Oneida County was called at Rome, July 1st, 1806, and the call was responded to by twenty-nine of the physicians of the county to organize the Oneida County Medical Society. Amos G. Hull was elected President; Sewal Hopkins, Vice-President; David Hasbrouck, Secretary; Seth Hastings, Treasurer, and Caleb Sampson, delegate to the State Society. Francis Guiteau, Matthew Brown, Welcome Sayles, El-nathan Judd, and Sherman Bartholomew, Censors. The anniversary was fixed for the first Tuesday in July, to be held at Utica, and Seth Hastings, Sewal Hopkins, and Caleb Sampson were appointed to prepare by-laws for the society.

It is interesting to turn our thoughts back to the time when twenty-nine of the physicians of the county left their business and traveled over the bad roads of that early day fifteen and twenty miles to organize a medical society in conformity to the recent law of the State. It is difficult in these days of easy transit to realize the fatigue and

hardship they endured, or the professional enthusiasm which urged them forward in the face of so many obstacles, to complete the task. The great impulse to their exertions lay in the unfolding of new principles of action, in bringing before them a new theater for the display of professional ability; for now their rights were secured by law, and a line of demarkation was established by State authority, separating in a great measure the unqualified and the qualified medical practitioners. It has been my fortune to meet several of the men who were actors in this first meeting, and to know something of their character from personal observation. They were men fitted for the times in which they lived, and not only the founders of this society, but most of their successors who enrolled their names among the zealous workers for its welfare, were men of mental acumen and unfaltering energy, who were devoted to the interests of their chosen profession, who labored faithfully for the relief of human suffering, and conscientiously for the welfare of the human family.

We will return from this digression, and resume the history of this society. The first meeting at Rome, held the first of July, adjourned to meet at Whitesboro the second day of September, eighteen hundred and six. The committee to prepare a code of by-laws not being ready to report, they were continued, to report at the annual meeting in July, 1807. At the annual meeting the committee reported a system of by-laws, which was adopted,

and a farther new appointment of Drs. Hopkins, Sampson, Wolcott, Sayles, Capron, Francis Guiteau and Luther Guiteau was made to report a fee bill for the society. The character of the men who were appointed on this commission is sufficient to show they placed little value on the bread and butter side of the profession.

At the meeting held the 12th of January, 1808, at Judge Ostrom's, in the village of Utica, the fee bill was adopted as reported by the commission. There was nothing peculiar in the fee bill. The prices were graduated for the times, and a liberal margin allowed to meet the necessities of individual patients. Doctors Sampson, Hopkins, Francis Guiteau and Luther Guiteau were appointed to deliver dissertations on typhus fever at the anniversary meeting in July. At this meeting strong resolutions were passed against illegal practitioners. It is very evident that we have not the advantage of that law which bound them to the legal enactments so recently passed; for now the State in its great liberality has legalized almost every kind of medical practitioners. Amasa Trowbrige was admitted to membership at this meeting, and the next year asked for a letter to the Jefferson County Society. He located in Watertown, and became the leading surgeon of that section of the State. The meeting held the thirtieth of July, 1810, closed the first period of its existence. Since its organization in 1806, covering a period of four years, it had held seven meetings, adopted a code of by-laws, formed



a fee bill to regulate the prices in the county, and established a representation to the State Society. Ten new members had been admitted, making thirty-seven in the aggregate, to guard the interests of the profession. We have no means, of course, to determine what causes led to the suspension of its regular meetings.

The enthusiasm which first led the physicians of the county to organize and found this society, had in some measure been burned out, while the distance to be traveled, with the loss of time and the fatigue to be endured, would seem good reasons for this apathy. But it was not destined long to slumber. The noble impulses which were fostered in the free intercourse of men engaged in the same pursuit for four years, called for renewed exertions, and after a three years rest the society awoke from its dreamless sleep and became a leader in the medical army of the State. On the establishment of its regular meetings, the men who had joined and those who united in the few succeeding years, gave the society a prominent place in the medical meetings of the State.

A meeting had been called for July 6, 1813, and a good representation of the leading physicians of the county responded to the call, and re-organized the meetings, by electing the regular officers of the society. A committee was appointed to devise means for establishing a library, and the number of members necessary to form a quorum was reduced to seven. Recommendations for the purchase of books



and adopting a plan for the use of the library were the more important results of this meeting.

In 1814, January 6, the semi-annual meeting was held at Utica, when a circular from the State Medical Society was presented asking the co-operation of this society at the present Legislature, for a change in the State law; but as the report of the committee to whom it was referred has not been preserved, nor the circular itself, we are left in ignorance of the objects sought to be obtained.

Rules regulating the use of books from the library, and the annual tax of \$1.50 per head were adopted. The annual meeting in July was the first in which the Treasurer's report was presented in due form, and passed through the hands of an auditing committee, and the first in which members were fined for non-attendance. The fine was one dollar, and no professional engagements would be allowed to cancel the debt.

In 1810 a circular from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and from Columbia College, offering students free access to the lectures had been received, and a committee appointed to mature the plan of examinations for such students as desired the aid of their liberality; but in the three years' suspension of its meetings both the committee and its objects were lost sight of. In 1814 a plan for organizing the library department and drawing books was adopted, and a catalogue of the books to be purchased and the periodicals to be secured for its use by the society, seems to be one of the

most important results of this year. In 1817 Amos G. Hull's truss for the cure of hernia had been patented, and the Secretary of this society was directed to give him a certificate of recommendation for his patent. Dr. Hull was then President of this society, and delegate to the State Medical Society. This official action seems to be a strange commentary on the stringent measures before taken by the society for violation of its code of medical ethics. The fee bill was changed so as to conform to the State Medical Society. An effort was now on foot to get a pharmacopea of the United States, and this society engaged in the plan and gave its influence to the measure in 1819. The initiation fee was now established at one dollar per annum, and the Vice-President to give an address at the semi-annual meeting. Typhus fever seems to have been epidemic for several years, and some of the most prominent men in the profession had been designated to prepare articles for the benefit of the society. Dr. Luther Guiteau was the only one of the five appointed to the duty who responded to the call, and his dissertation has not been preserved. The society should now be rich in manuscripts of addresses and dissertations covering a period of seventy-two years, in which the changes in disease induced by the transition from a newly settled condition of the country to a higher state of culture and civilization would have been portrayed. A fine of five dollars had been imposed for neglecting to read dissertations when appointed, and in

1820 the Treasurer was directed to enforce collection. The semi-annual meeting of 1821, and the annual meeting in July, the same year, failed for want of a quorum. A few of the medical men of the society met at Whitesboro, on the 18th of October, 1821, and appointed a committee of three to revise the by-laws, and report to the semi-annual meeting in 1822. The result was a more thorough and perfect system of rules to regulate the action of the society than had ever before been adopted. For several years after the meeting in 1822, but few changes were made in the society, and only the usual appropriations to the State Society and the delegate were made. The society was now entering upon a period of prosperity, a library had been established, with frequent appropriations to increase the number of its volumes and periodicals, and establish a fund for a prize essay. At the annual meeting in July, 1825, the award was given to Luther Guiteau in answer to the question what constitutes fever. This essay has been preserved, and is in the hands of the society. At the meeting in 1826 preliminary steps were taken to found a lunatic assylum for the county, with or without a hospital. There was another revision of the by-laws in 1828, and a committee appointed to confer with the trustees of Hamilton College for the purpose of forming a medical branch under the auspices of the County Society. In 1824 Robert C. Wood was admitted to membership, who became distinguished as Surgeon-General of the army

in Mexico with General Taylor, and James Douglass, founder of a private lunatic asylum at Quebec. In 1829 a committee was appointed to consider the subject of a medical journal, and a voluminous report on the subject of intemperance was offered to the different papers of the county for publication. A revision in the form of the diploma of the county was reported this year, and adopted.

An effort was made in 1830 to have the general law of the State for the organization of County Medical Societies repealed; and the society promptly called a special meeting, and sent forward a remonstrance. At this meeting Andrew P. Moore made his charges against Dr. Newell Smith for criminal operations on his wife, and for unlawful intimacy connected therewith, covering a period of about eighteen months. Special meetings were held to hear the report of committees, and to obtain evidence, which resulted in his expulsion from the society in October, 1832.

At the semi-annual meeting, in 1834, Dr. C. B. Coventry introduced a preamble and resolutions, praying the State Legislature to pass a special act for building an asylum for the benefit of the insane poor of the State. He urged the necessity, especially on the State Society, and through them on the Legislature, and the massive walls and fluted columns of the State Asylum in our city will stand a lasting monument of his philanthropic spirit, until it crumbles into dust from the ravages of time.



At the annual meeting, in 1836, Dr. Blair, President, gave an address on the changes that had followed the epidemics of 1793, 1812 and 1832, and their influence on the character of disease in this section of the State. An address before the society in 1838, by Theodore Pomeroy, describing the fatal epidemic of puerperal fever which prevailed in the winter of thirty or thirty-one, with all its practical teachings, has been lost. The prize essay of Dr. Luther Guiteau, on typhus fever, the important changes that followed the fearful epidemics described by Dr. Blair, and the more limited, but equally distressing scourge, in the ratio of its victims, in the reported cases of Dr. Pomeroy ; all of them connected with interesting periods of medical history, and described by living witnesses, now leave only a blank leaf for us to study, instead of the lessons of experience. These are only a tithe of what has been lost by not having a proper system of preservation for the important papers that have become the property of the society.

In 1839 a committee was appointed to ascertain the number of insane and of idiots in the county. An effort was made to abolish the power of county societies to examine students and grant diplomas, which raised an opposition quite as strong as the one a few years before, to have the medical laws of the State repealed.

In 1843 a valuable acquisition was made to the membership of the society by the admission of Dr. Amariah Brigham, Superintendent of the Lunatic

Asylum. He came to Utica, to take charge of this institution, from the Hartford Retreat for the Insane, with a reputation securely established for this department of medical science, and a name for intellectual gifts that had few rivals.

In 1846 an effort was made to increase the usefulness and interests of the society by dividing it into sections, so as to have two dissertations at each meeting. In the following year a new measure was proposed, that of quarterly meetings, but at that time so few of the members became zealous workmen, that after a very few efforts to keep them up, the plan failed, and the quarterlies died a natural death. The stated times for the regular meetings had been fixed on the first Tuesday of July and January. It was so often that they occurred on New Year's day and the Fourth of July, that a resolution was carried in 1848, changing the time to the second Tuesday in each month. The society had now for a few years been losing in its strength and importance; no steps that had been taken to regain its former prestige had been successful, and a dark and portentous cloud shrouded it in gloom and threatened its destruction. The annual attendance ranged from eight to sixteen, and in 1851 but one dollar and ninety-three cents was in the treasury, with outstanding bills of indebtedness to large amounts. Special notices were sent to all the practising physicians, and strong appeals were made through individual efforts to arouse the members to a proper sense of the dan-

ger of its extinction. In 1853 a new treasurer was elected, who had been a strong advocate for enforcing collections, and within one week after his appointment, four of the prominent delinquents in different parts of the county had been sued. Of course strong opposition was roused to the measure, and every available means of defence were set up to avoid payment. A few lessons in the sale and costs of collecting under an execution seemed to be a good argument in favor of attending the meetings and paying without further trouble. The Society's tax had been repealed, its fines remitted, and the initiation fee of three dollars abolished, to bring back the recreant members, but it had all been to no use.

The State law was so amended in 1853 that it gave the same number of delegates to the State society as we had of members to the Legislature. The influence of the new measures for collecting the annual tax became manifest in the increased attendance, and its improved treasury, so that in 1855 the new system of by-laws had been printed, and the semi-centennial year dawned on a renovated society, again starting on a career of prosperity, which gave promise of better days to come.

At the semi-annual meeting of January 7, 1856, a resolution was passed ordering a semi-centennial celebration for the annual meeting, to be held the eighth of July, in the city of Utica. A committee of seven was appointed to organize a plan of action, and to establish such measures as would most

certainly carry forward the cherished wish of its members, and in this public union of the medical men of this county, acknowledge the great obligations we owed to the heroes of 1806. The address of welcome to the guests by the chairman of the committee of arrangements, will give some idea of the spirit and enthusiasm with which this call for a semi-centennial anniversary was hailed by the medical men of the county: "Gentlemen, fifty years have just passed, the first of this month, since twenty-nine of the medical men of the county of Oneida, met at Rome, and organized the Oneida County Medical Society. At the semi-annual meeting of the society, held at Rome, the 8th day of January, 1856, a committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements for holding a semi-centennial celebration. They have fixed on this day and this place, for the interesting ceremonies. In behalf of that committee, gentlemen, I welcome you to this hall; not as strangers, but as brethren; fellow-laborers in the same calling; members of one and the same noble profession. Yes, gentlemen, we have come here to-day to commemorate an important professional movement; to do honor to the founders of this society, and to extend to the survivors of that noble band a cordial greeting. At that time there were but two of the original founders left. They were escorted to their places of honor, at the well loaded tables, by Dr. Coventry and Dr. McCall, where, with the members of the profession of this and adjoining counties, with



the invited guests, they gave ample assurance of their ability to enjoy the pleasure of this social union, and to contrast its poor and meager advent with the prestige of this its crowning hour. Men eminent on the bench and at the bar, the Mayor and Common Council of the city, distinguished representatives of the press, and citizens of social position and character, all united in giving prominence to this anniversary meeting of the medical men of Oneida county.

At the time of the annual meeting, in July, 1857, a portion of the Lunatic Asylum was destroyed by fire. Dr. Bagg offered a resolution of sympathy with the officers and managers of the institution, which was passed unanimously. (Those who believed it was caused by the negligence of the active officers of the asylum, were willing to give them this mark of consideration while suffering from such a fearful calamity.) It can be said to the praise of the management, that no inmate was injured in this fiery ordeal, but a young and promising physician lost his life in vain efforts to save this monument of pride to the citizens of Utica. This year a resolution was passed to divide the life of the society into five periods of ten years each, and all who had died in each of the ten years, whose biographies had not been written, should be cared for by the individuals appointed for each period. Dr. McCall was appointed for the first, Dr. Coventry for the second, Dr. Barrows for the third, Dr. Bagg for the fourth, and Dr. Thomas for the fifth. We never

had reports, I think, covering either of the above periods.

A fee bill was adopted, and another petition was sent to the Legislature praying for the appointment of a commissioner of lunacy. In 1859 Dr. Coventry reviewed the works of Drs. Forbes and Bigelow, on nature and art in the cure of disease. The society ordered its publication, and in January, 1860, three hundred copies were ready for distribution. Arba Blair, President of the Society, and one of the original founders, from the infirmities of age, being unable to attend the anniversary meeting, presented several ancient works on medicine, to be preserved by the Society, as exhibiting by contrast the improvements made in the art of book-making, as well as in the science of medicine and surgery. July, 1861, another resolution and petition to the Legislature for the appointment of a commissioner of lunacy, to inquire into the condition of the insane confined in the poor houses and jails, was presented by Dr. Coventry. The committee reported in 1862 that circulars had been sent to most of the county societies, and many petitions sent to the Legislature, and at the semi-annual meeting in 1864 the medical men of the county signed a petition from this county, which was followed by the passage of the bill soon after.

In 1864 it was proposed to divide the life of the Society into five periods of ten years each. The first period was given to Drs. McCall and Whaley, the second to C. B. and W. B. Coventry, the third

to Chas. and F. M. Barrows, the fourth to Dr. Thomas, and the fifth to Dr. Bagg. The duties assigned, were for the gentlemen named, to prepare notices of all the members who had died in each period, whose biographies had not been written.

By resolution, the fees for medical services were increased one hundred per cent. It will only be necessary to refer to the increased expense of living, caused by the calamities of the civil war, which then threatened the life of the nation, to give good reason for the increased value of medical services. Fifty certificates of membership were reported by the committee. They were copied from the first issue, which was on parchment, with the portrait of the head of John Hunter. Amount in treasury, \$83.26.

In 1865 the attendance still continued large in comparison with the past, and the collections increased in a corresponding degree. Dr. Coventry's essay on Tuberculosis was ordered to be published, and 300 copies were ready for distribution.

At the semi-annual meeting, January 9, 1866, the prevalence of influenza attracted the attention of the Society. It was considered the harbinger of severe epidemic disease, which seemed proved by its advent in December, 1831, and had preceded the advent of all the severe epidemic diseases since the cholera of 1832. We have no means to determine now how such atmospheric conditions may have operated long before this period. Resolutions were reported touching the services of Dr. Walter

B. Coventry in the army, and the promise he had given of future eminence in his profession.

At the annual meeting, in 1867, the President gave an address on the founding and development of the first hospitals of the United States. Dr. Gray generously proposed to publish the address in the *Journal of Insanity*, and give the Society one hundred copies. His offer was accepted, the address was published and distributed to the several members of the county.

A semi-annual meeting of 1868 was called to order, and the deaths of Drs. J. McCall and N. H. Dering were announced, and appropriate measures taken to give them a fitting place in the annals of medicine. Dr. McCall, through a long life, had been one of the leading men in the Society, by his firmness and decision guarding its interests, and with zealous ambition striving to give it rank and consideration among men. Dr. Dering, with a shorter life among us, had lent his enthusiasm for the medical profession to aid the Society in holding the rank it had obtained among the societies of the State.

At the annual meeting Dr. Bagg gave his eulogy on Dr. Dering, and C. B. Coventry on the life and character of Dr. McCall. The President, Dr. Guitau, gave an address on the influences produced by the early settlements of a country, and the effects which civilization has over the vital forces of the human family.

The subject of quarterly meetings was again



called up, and a resolution offered to hold them the second Tuesday of January, April, July and October. This resolution was laid over to the semi-annual meeting in 1869.

At this meeting the resolution became a law of the Society, and the first quarterly meeting was fixed for April 12th, to be held in Utica.

At the annual meeting, July 13th, 1869, a committee was appointed to examine and report the standing of applicants for admission to membership. But little care had been taken for several years of the acquirements and standing of persons admitted to membership, and the committee reported the following: "That applicants be required to file in the County Clerk's office their diplomas, before presenting themselves for membership."

At the second quarterly meeting, held October 11th, 1869, resolutions were passed condemning the criminal acts of the abortionist. Really there was no discussion on the questions involved in the resolution, for a crime so abhorrent to the best feelings of human nature could have no advocates in a society of high-minded medical men, zealous to maintain the purity of the profession.

At the semi-annual meeting in 1870, January 11th, the deaths of the brothers Drs. H. and G. Pope were brought to the notice of the Society. They had both died of the same disease—hypertrophy of the prostate. Resolutions were passed commemorating the positions they had held in the practice of medicine.

At the quarterly meeting held the 11th of April, the amended fee bill was passed, and one of the members expelled for immoral conduct.

The semi-annual meeting in 1871, January 10th, could claim unusual interest, for one of the veterans of the Society, whose name graced the roll of the first meeting and the founding of the Society—now the only survivor, ninety-one years old, came to meet with the Society once more before being called to his never-ending home. Time had touched him lightly, for after the seventy years since he began the practice of his profession, he showed few signs of such a life of toil and exposure.

The quarterly meeting this year, in October, took up the subject recommended by the American Medical Association, and resolved to use its influence to have half free scholarships in the New York College of Veterinary Surgeons.

At the semi-annual meeting of 1872, delegates to the American Medical Association were instructed to vote for the admission of women, properly qualified in the profession, to membership.

At the quarterly meeting in April Dr. Flandrau reported a case of delirium tremens from the use of hydrate of chloral.

Dr. Gray, at the annual meeting, invited the Society to hold its next quarterly meeting at the Lunatic Asylum, which was accepted, and the members of the Society, at the October meeting, after organizing, adjourned to the Asylum. The members were conducted through many of the wards of

the institution, saw Professor Dick's demonstrations of morbid anatomy, Kempster's microscopic specimens, and closed the labors of the day by getting fresh supplies of the necessities of life from a table of large dimensions and magnificent supplies. Through the Doctor's exertions the meeting had been a novel and interesting one, and the members did not fail to give public expression in the records of the Society of the gratification they had received.

Resolutions were offered and freely discussed at the semi-annual meeting in January, 1873, asking for an amendment of the Code of Medical Ethics, so as to allow medical men to meet all practitioners who had been educated in schools recognized by the laws of the State. This proposition seemed to many who had not carefully examined the subject, a striking innovation on the usages of the Society, and it was finally laid on the table. In April, a resolution bearing on the same question, met the same fate.

As a rule, I have confined myself, in this history, to notice only those measures which had finally been adopted, leaving questions which had been proposed, but not adopted, unnoticed. This case proposed a measure which had been thoroughly examined in my investigations for the benefit of the Society. I have been for a long time satisfied that a change must be made, and wished this Society to have the honor of being a leading power in the transaction. I do not wish to urge the Society to

rashly make a change, and this is not the proper place to bring forward arguments in behalf of the proposed measure. When it becomes an established fact, it will then belong to the history of the Society.

In 1873 the State Society reported in favor of a committee on hygiene in every county of the State. At the semi-annual meeting in 1874, the committee made a partial report and were continued for farther investigations. This committee in 1875 were directed to present a petition to the Common Council of the city of Utica, asking for large sewers in the eastern part of the city and another in the western, which the Council had the good sense to adopt.

In 1875, charges were made against a member for violations of the Code of Ethics, in publishing notices in a daily paper, and in circulars distributed in the surrounding villages, promising marvelous cures. The author was expelled from the Society. At the quarterly meeting in October, a series of resolutions were received from the New York Society, relating to the law of the State to prevent cruelty to animals, which declared that nothing in this act shall be construed to prohibit or interfere with any properly conducted scientific experiments or investigations. It was the sense of this meeting that the investigations in physiology and pathology, by experiments on animals, had been of incalculable benefit to the science of medicine, and that they had been so managed as to be almost en-



tirely devoid of suffering to the animals so used, and that no investigations could be allowed by unprofessional men, who were not qualified to examine the methods used, nor understand the results to be obtained.

The large increase in the population of the county and the multiplied interests of the profession have now made our quarterly meetings equal, in the regular attendance, to the annual and semi-annual of former days. At the quarterly meeting, April, 1876, thirty members responded to the call, and the record of the regular attendance is sufficient proof of the interest taken by the members of the Society. Three prominent men in the Society had recently died—Dr. Bissell, Dr. Preston and Dr. Coventry. Dr. Bissell was an energetic, stirring man, prompt and decided, a good practitioner, and disposed to mingle in politics. Dr. Preston, in his early life, held a good and fair position among medical men, and was a popular practitioner in Sangerfield and Waterville. Dr. Coventry was too well and widely known to require more than a passing notice here. His contributions to the literature of the profession have been large, and, with his report on the medical jurisprudence of insanity, delivered at the American Medical Association at Washington in 1858, has given him rank as an able writer. The resolutions of the city physicians and those of the County Society, with its memorial notice, attest his worth.

Grouped in the same catalogue, we have to

notice the death of Dr. John McCall, one of the zealous members of the Society, who was a living example of professional dignity and honor; of Goodsell, Blair, Guiteau, Whaley, Sampson, Alexander Coventry, N. H. Dering and many others whose names have given character to the profession in Oneida County. I would gladly enlarge, did time and space permit. Most of them have their records in the transactions of the State Society, where their histories have been preserved, and where all that is worthy of imitation or that could aid us in the struggles of professional life can be found to help us onward.

1876 finds the Society with its regular meetings, its interesting topics of hygiene and disease, but nothing notable in the passing events of the profession. During the year of 1877 there does not appear to have been any falling off of the attendance at the meetings, and there has been a more regular and increased interest among its members, and the quarterlies of April and October were equally well attended with the January and July meetings.

We have now gone over the history of this Society from its organization in 1806 to the present time, 1878. We have endeavored to reproduce as little as possible of the narratives of Drs. Bagge and Porter. They have both gone over the records to the year 1870, and in order to keep up a connected history, I have often had to trespass upon their details and blend the three histories into one. They have left tables of attendance and receipts,

and from those two sources we have judged of the prosperity of the Society. These tables covered the periods when we had only two meetings a year. The average attendance from 1843 to 1850 was 16, and from 1836 to 1843 about the same. From 1829 to 1836, 34, and from 1822 to 1839, 24. From 1850 to 1857, about 18. From 1857 to 1864, a fraction over 24, and the next seven years, is about 35. A new era dates from the beginning of the quarterlies in 1869, and the average is a fraction over 22 at each meeting, showing a marked increase in attendance per annum. An attempt had been made to have quarterly meetings as early as 1843 or 1844, but there was not enthusiasm enough to keep them up, and the failure was so decided that many members who had been engaged in the first effort were at first unwilling to engage in the proposed change. The first quarterly was held in April, and the large attendance and interest manifested in the proceedings, gave promise of a fair measure of success.

The item of receipts has been an important element in the Society—the index of its growth and decline. No regular reports were made by the Treasurer until 1822. From that time his accounts were regularly presented and examined, and the amounts he had received yearly, carefully recorded until 1855, when there was an interruption of ten years, or until 1865.

From 1822 to '29,	average receipts	\$117	per annum.
From 1829 to '35,	"	80	"
From 1835 to '42,	"	58	"
From 1842 to '49,	"	35	"

The records of the Treasurer have been lost, and as the Secretary failed in his reports to name the amount collected, we are not able to give the yearly amounts received. It will be seen that for a few years after the regular reports of the Treasurer were made to the Society, the amount annually received was large,—one year being \$159 and one \$184, so that the seven years' average was over \$117. The next seven years it declined to \$58, and ran down to a mere trifle in 1849. One reason for the large amounts from 1822 forward, was the income from fines and giving diplomas. It is interesting to note that as the Society grew remiss in collecting its dues, and repealed one after another of its sources of revenue, the attendance declined, and, with its declension, professional interest and enthusiasm were lost. When reaching its lowest ebb, with an empty treasury, bills unpaid, and a scanty attendance, there was but one step more to dissolution, and the prestige of the Medical Society of the County of Oneida would be lost forever. Efforts were made to meet this unfortunate condition, and to bring the Society back to its normal state; but appeals were useless. Like many tottering institutions, the first great need was money. To obtain this, a new order of management was necessary, and a change in the Treasurer's department, when enforced payment of the taxes (for all other sources of revenue had been cut off) was made the law, and in a few years, with a replenished treasury and increased interest and attend-



ance, the Society started on a career of prosperity that has rivaled the most sanguine expectations of its palmy days.

We have now traversed the records of seventy-two years of this Society's history. For forty-six years I have taken a more or less active part in its transactions. During that time I have joined with its prominent and leading members in a warfare for its preservation, and in spite of all difficulties, to so manage its manifold interests that it might hold a prominent position and have no rival in the societies of the State. It has been the source of many important measures in the science of medicine. It has had a few leading men in its ranks who sought to build up the profession, and were ready to make sacrifices for the welfare of the whole. No association can last long, whose members surrender its interests to the cravings of personal ambition. A standard has been raised and adopted, fixing the remuneration for medical services, and it is the duty of every member to sustain its prices. But when men who claim to be in full communion in such association, seek and obtain business (from those abundantly able to pay) by agreeing to a reduced percentage on the regular prices of the Society, the binding cohesion of time-honored principles has been outraged, and the honor and dignity of a noble profession has been lost in the groveling acquisitions of individual avarice.

To elevate its character and the character of its

members, it has purged itself from the stain of unbridled passion, the criminal actors of anti-natal murder, and the selfish pursuits of the charlatan and nostrum vender.

I have annexed a table of the names of the members and the dates of their admission to membership. Most of them who have died, have had eulogies prepared under the direction of the State Society, whilst others have had fitting memorials recorded in the annals of the County Association. It is always easy to look back and see what might have been done. A wise management of the finances of the Society, more stringent laws, and a continued imposition of fines for neglected duties, with a larger annual tax, if necessary, would have yielded a revenue which could have been used for founding a Medical Hall, for the use of the Society,—a fit place for holding its meetings, to preserve its addresses and dissertations, its varied collections in Pathological Anatomy, its library, its records, and all that would give it interest in the eyes of the profession. Had such a plan been organized, and a pains-taking effort been instituted to accomplish this object, men of means in our profession, and friends of the vocation, might have felt it their duty to give material aid to a movement that was destined to accomplish so much good. I have on a former occasion alluded to a similar plan, but it fell lifeless to the ground; and for the future, I can see no chance for such an action to be set forward, unless some of the physicians who

have been blessed with a grand patrimony, or others whose resources have brought them gold in untold measure, can fall into the current of improvement, and, with cheerful heart, give to the founding of an institution whose blessings will last for all coming time. If we could catch the enthusiasm that has moved the Free Masons to found and maintain their halls for public services, or the no less noble organization of Odd Fellows, and others of a kindred nature, where the spell or enchantment of secret rites has been powerful enough to bring forth gold to lavish in adorning halls and in gaudy vestments and the various orders of those institutions, we might have filled the picture I have thus unskilfully drawn.

I have now discharged the duty imposed on me by the resolution of this Society, in July, 1877. My labors in the interest of this Society have been faithfully discharged. Since my admission to membership in 1832, age has in some measure diminished the enthusiasm of those early years, and the sad realities of professional life have thrown a dark shadow over the glowing prospects of youthful ambition.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST.

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July, 1850—One hundred and eighty-seven volumes in the Library. Of these, sixty-one are bound periodicals.

1848, onward, a period of great depression in receipts and attendance.

1851—\$1.93 in the treasury, and bills to a large amount outstanding.

In 1853—Resolution passed, asking the Secretary to send special notices to each practising physician, of every meeting. D. G. Thomas elected Treasurer. Sued four doctors within a week.

1853—Law amended so as to give same number of delegates to State Society as we have members of the Legislature.

1855—Funds increased and By-Laws printed.

January 8, 1856—Resolved to hold semi-centennial celebration. Committee of Arrangements, Drs. Thomas, McCall, Dering, Goodsell, Coventry, Guiteau, Blair and Beach. Held July 8.

1858—Motion to make a Fee bill. Carried, and the one reported adopted.

1860—Commissioner of Lunacy. July, committee appointed. C. B. Coventry, Bissell and Guiteau.

1861—Committee on Commissioner of Lunacy was continued, not being ready to report. Did report at annual meeting in July, with a petition to the State Legislature.

1862—Circulars sent by Committee on Commissioner of Lunacy to the Medical Society of the State, and petition presented to the Legislature.

1864—Members signed petition to Legislature for a Commissioner of Lunacy. A new order for certificates of membership.

1865—More members taken for Commissioners of Lunacy.

1868—Quarterly meeting appointed.



LIST OF MEMBERS THAT MET AT ROME,  
JULY 1, 1806.

Amos G. Hull,	Alexander Whaley,
Sewal Hopkins,	Morris Sherman,
David Hasbrouck,	Paul Hutchinson,
Seth Hastings, Jr.,	Elephas Bissell,
Caleb Sampson,	Seth Capron,
Francis Guiteau,	Daniel Avery,
Matthew Brown, Jr.,	John Fitch,
Welcome Sayles,	Enoch Alden,
Elnathan Judd,	Stephen Preston,
Sherman Bartholomew,	Arba Blair,
Marcus Hitchcock,	Thomas G. Hooker,
Isaac Weston,	Norton Porter,
Thomas Hartwell,	Seth Hastings,
Lurens Hull,	Samuel Frisbee.
Zenas Hutchinson,	

MEMBERS, WITH DATE OF ADMISSION,  
FROM 1806 TO THE PRESENT TIME.

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September 2, 1806—Solomon Wolcott, Nathaniel Rose, Isaac Goodsell, Ferris Deming, Levi Bills, Lucius Kellogg, Sylvester Nash, Joel Rathbone, Joshua Ransom.

December 4, 1806—Chester Gaylord, James Tyler.

July 8, 1807—Andrew French, Luther Guiteau, Samuel Snow, Chester Gaylord, W. W. Wadsworth, Spalding Prince.

January 12, 1808—Christian Storkman.

July 5, 1808—Amasa Trowbridge, Henry Smith.

August 13, 1809—William Fitch.

July 6, 1813—Isaac Cushman, Ira Cross, Erastus Cross, Lemuel Chester, Ezra Williams, Nathaniel Cheever.

September 14, 1813—Lewis Riggs, Campbell Waldo.

December 17, 1813—D. Campbell.

January 6, 1814—John M. Watson, Charles Babcock, R. P. Thayer, Willbur Tillinghast, Josiah Noyes.

March 29, 1814—Benjamin Russell,

May 19—Merrill Wright, licensed.

May 20—Peter B. Bessey, licensed.

July 5—Daniel Barker, David M. Hale.

September 5, 1815—Leverett Bishop, licensed; Medina Preston, licensed; Eleashib Adams, licensed.

September 27—Anson Hayden, licensed.

December 26—W. M. Coventry.

March 6, 1816—John Young, Morris T. Jewell, I. B. Burton, Henry C. Hecox, licensed.

July 1, 1817—Abram Parker, Lyman Huntly, Leverett Bishop, Thomas Goodsell.

September 13—John Brown, licensed.

January 6, 1818—J. B. Palmer.

July 7—Jotham Snow, Remsen; Emery Bissell, Paris; Moses Bristol, Paris; Silas West, Paris; Ariel Norton, Vernon.

January 5, 1819—George Brown.

July 6—David M. Richards.

July 4, 1820—Seth S. Peck, Luther Spalding, U. H. Kellogg.

September 5—Anson Jones, licensed.

January 1, 1822—Alexander Coventry, John McCall, Theodore Pomeroy, Edmund Allen.

July 21—Medina Preston, L. Z. Havens, John F. Trowbridge, Hezekiah Gates.

September 25, 1822—Benjamin M. Root, licensed.

January 7, 1823—W. B. Page, licensed.

July 1—Stephen Winchester, Almon Beardsley, Abram Chase, Abram Dietendorff, Levi Buckingham, John S. Lawrence, Curtis Havens.

July 6, 1824—Samuel Beach, James Douglass, Robert C. Wood, William Jones, Samuel Tuttle, T. L. Mills.

January 4, 1825—Horatio Gates, Levi Beardsley.

July 5—G. P. Judd, C. B. Coventry, Edward Aikin, Isaac Freeman, Herbert Hastings, Newell Smith.

January 3, 1826—Welcome A. Clark, W. P. Cleveland, licensed.

July 4—John A. Paine, John Stevens, Hucker Storrs, Caleb Burge.

January 2, 1827—Benjamin Crossman, Luther Guiteau, Dr. Harral.

January 1, 1828—F. B. Henderson, Samuel Boomer, O. L. B. Main, A. McAllister.

July 1—Benjamin Earl Bowen, licensed; Patrick McCraith, P. B. Peckham, Covell Lee, George H. Wright, David Ely, Ezra Watson, J. P. Batchelder, Eli Botstord, Jeremiah Knight, Parker Sedgewick, R. W. Smith, licensed.

July 7, 1829—J. N. Meacham, Alfred Gillett, J. D. Bancroft, Thomas M. Foot, Ralph Lord, Nathaniel Sherrill, Charles Porter, John Gridley, R. S. Sykes, William Abell.

January 5, 1830—Elijah Ward, Nathan North, Marcus Hitchcock, H. H. Pope.

July—Isaac H. Douglass, W. S. Lobdell, William C. Warner, J. W. Fitch, Warner Wadsworth, J. W. Hitchcock.

July, 1831—Abram Ward Marsh, Rufus Priest, Lewis Yale, H. F. Noyes.

January 3, 1832—H. L. Ruggles, licensed.

July 3— ——— Van Zandt, G. W. Gardner, Edward Loomis, James Whaley, George Cleaveland, licensed.

January 1, 1833—Reuben Luce, Ichabod Davis, Walton Hazzard Peckham.

July 2—S. W. Stewart, W. W. Tefft, William Giles, D. V. Bradford.

January 3, 1832—Asahael Grant, James S. Douglass, S. L. Benjamin, Daniel G. Thomas, Aaron B. Blye, John Statts, J. M. Fuller, E. G. Mygatt, E. C. Cadwell.

January 7, 1834—S. H. Blossom, L. F. Harvey.

July 1—E. A. Munger, ——— Fitch, ——— Howes, Josiah Rathbone, Daniel Brandt, A. P. Laird.

January 6, 1835—David Larabee, J. B. McKibben, G. W. Pope.

July 7—Lyman Buckley, J. B. Colwell, William Kirkwood, Charles Barrows, G. J. Sheldon.

January 5, 1836—R. S. Sears, J. P. Newland.

January 3, 1837—Almon Pitcher.

July 4—E. G. Peckham, B. Budlong, Phineas Hart, licensed; Asaph Rhodes, licensed; J. L. Kellogg, licensed.

July, 1838—J. V. Cobb, W. H. Davis.

January 1, 1839—W. H. Wiser, ——— Kneesburne.

July 2—Drs. Brock McVicar, Beach, Botsford, Trowbridge.

January 7, 1840—J. S. May.

January 5, 1841—Olmstead, King.

July 6—Trap, Hurlburt, M. M. Bagg, J. L. Kellogg, Teller, Hamilton.

July 5—P. M. Hastings, D. C. Hamilton.

January 3, 1843—W. A. Babcock, Amariah Brigham, made a member by the acts of the Society.

July 2, 1844—Drummond, Moulton.

July 1, 1845—J. W. Harmon.

July 6, 1846—F. M. Barrows.

July 6, 1847—J. H. Champion, N. H. Dering.

January 9, 1849—D. P. Bissell.

July 10—Hunt.

January 4, 1851—S. G. Wolcott, Harvard University; Ulric Burk, graduated at Edinbury; B. Phileo.

January 13, 1852—G. W. Pope, Jr.

July 13—A. D. Churchill.

January 10, 1854—D. C. Dewey.

January 9, 1855—H. N. Porter, J. Sturdevant, T. M. Flandreau, Hunt, Thayer.

July 10—A. S. Copeman, honorary member.

January 8, 1856—William Russell, Thomas Spear, Rose, Cornish, Brown.



- July 8—J. P. Gray, W. H. Gardner.  
 January 13, 1857—Brown, Frazier, Gillett, Valentine, McAllister.  
 July 14—A. Brower, C. K. I. Millard.  
 January 12, 1851—Huntley.  
 July 13—W. B. Coventry, J. E. Jones, S. B. Valentine, W. R. Griswold.  
 January 11, 1859—T. S. Virgil, E. J. Lawton, H. W. Carpenter.  
 July 12—C. L. Hogeboom, T. W. Wall, J. D. Hall, I. D. Hopkins, D. Terry, E. C. Bass.  
 January 10, 1860—C. E. Smith, Thomas Pell.  
 July 10—A. Putnam, H. B. Day.  
 January 14, 1862—A. S. Brower, H. L. Williams.  
 July 1—M. C. West.  
 January 13, 1863—A. A. Barrows.  
 July 14—A. Churchill, L. A. Tourtellot, Walter Booth, Edwin Hutchinson.  
 January 12, 1864—Charles H. Pegg, Isaac J. Hunt.  
 July 12—Bickford, Day, O. M. Rindel.  
 July 11, 1865—C. C. Reed, S. E. Shantee, R. M. Booth, E. G. Williams, Medina Preston, Jr., W. M. James, Francis Jones, Jr.  
 July 10, 1866—C. H. Hamlin, H. W. Caldwell, R. L. Dryer, Hugh Sloan, F. E. Hutchinson, E. G. Howland, J. M. Cleveland, A. O. Kellogg, J. W. Cooper, C. N. Palmer, J. C. Darling, Norton Wolcott, R. E. Sutton.  
 January 8, 1867—Matthias Cook, F. G. Dubois, Benjamin F. Pope.  
 July 9—C. N. Palmer, Fisk, J. A. Jenkins. Members present, 44.  
 January 14, 1868—T. J. Bergen.  
 July 14—A. C. McKnight, W. M. Baldwin.  
 January 13, 1869—Wales Buell.  
 April 13—J. B. Andrews, Walter Kempster, W. H. Nelson.  
 July 13—E. H. Thurston, H. C. Palmer, Albert Barnum.  
 January 12, 1870—H. G. Read.  
 April 12—Charles H. Bailey.  
 July—Charles B. Tefft.  
 January 10, 1871—George Leroy Menzee, Edward Brayton.

April 10—J. K. Chamberlayne, G. H. Wheelock, W. M. James.

October 10—S. P. Uhlein.

January 8, 1872—Daniel H. Kitchen.

July 12—P. H. Thomas.

October 7—J. G. Hunt.

April 8, 1873—Martin Cavana, Whitwell.

July 8—Smith Baker.

October 14—B. F. Haskins, W. E. Ford, A. T. Livingstone.

April 14, 1874—Charles E. Frazier, C. P. Russell, W. B. Palmer, R. H. Hewse.

July 14—E. H. Bullock, E. E. Smith.

October 14—F. Steinhausen, J. B. Drummond, J. B. Nold, David Bessee, James Hemstreet.

January 12, 1875—William Kenlin, David Bessee, G. A. Stockwell.

April 13—David Hughes, A. R. Simmons.

October 13—William Clark, A. P. Mains.

January 11, 1876—E. W. Rayner.

July 11—H. A. Ford, Wilbur H. Booth.

April 11, 1877—John Watson, George Seymour, J. S. O'Hara, J. V. Haberer.

October 13—H. B. Maben.

1878—L. F. Rinkle.

